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VENEZUELA.

Smallpox in Carabobo (Valencia), Los Andes, and Falcon.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
Washington, D. C., September 20, 1898.

SIR: I have the honor to inclose, for the information of the Supervising Surgeon-General, United States Marine-Hospital Service, a copy of a dispatch from our consul at Maracaibo, reporting an epidemic of smallpox in his consular district.

Respectfully, yours,

ALVEY A. ADEE,
Acting Secretary.

HON. SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

[Inclosure No. 1165.]

CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Maracaibo, August 21, 1898.

SIR: I have the honor to inform the Department of State that smallpox has at last made its appearance in different localities in this consular district, in the Los Andes States as well as in the State of Falcon.

There is no doubt that the State of Zulia and the city of Maracaibo will soon be smitten with the dangerous disease. Up to a late date hardly anything has been done here to protect the inhabitants of this large city.

Vaccine fluid in glass tubes and on ivory points has been imported from foreign countries; but, be the reason that the vaccine lymph was too old, or that this climate is too hot, no results were obtained. I myself have imported enough from New York to vaccinate all those under my protection; no result was gained.

Our Pasteur Institute has tried to produce the lymph from cows, but made a sad failure. The great name of Pasteur Institute is all that our physicians can boast of, but they can not prepare a cow for the purpose.

The Government here has now given order to buy those animals prepared for the purpose at the island of Curaçao.

It is time that our authorities begin to wake up; the streets are kept cleaner and the inside of the premises of the houses, but this will not help much.

Maracaibo is a thoroughly diseased place, as we never can root out yellow fever and dysentery, neither can we protect ourselves against smallpox should this disease make its appearance. Drainage, we have none; the old part of the city lies only a few feet above the brackish water of the lake; rivers and sweet-water courses we have none. The only sweet water we have is gathered in cisterns by the well-to-do people, provided it rains.

Water-closets only exist in the houses of rich people, and most of them are badly constructed.

The ground on which Maracaibo stands is saturated since its foundation of hundreds of years with the dirt and *excrement* of human beings.

All this, in connection with the terrible heat by day and night and the natural uncleanness of the people, is most favorable ground for a smallpox epidemic.

The city council has now ordered the building of a barrack on an old plantation called Santa Polonia several miles from the city for a hospital, but I am afraid it will be the focus for the disease in the future. I have advised to use a small island which lies close to the leper island, about 2 miles distant, for that purpose. It lies open to the breezes and can easily be reached with steam launches; without which the sick are much shaken and exposed to the sun.

To the place selected where they are now erecting the barracks no road leads, or what we would call a road. To convey sick persons in carts or wagons there will be a torture for the poor diseased.

The outlook is very gloomy for Maracaibo. Should smallpox come our port will be closed and our commerce stopped for some time; we will be then what we may call "Aislados."

The disease seems to have a very malignant character. In Valencia, of 2,000 smallpox cases 600 have died. Valencia is the garden spot of Venezuela; it lies high up on a table land in the cordilleras, has a mild, beautiful climate, good drainage, plenty of sweet water, and, above all, a rocky foundation. If the disease could, up to date, make such ravage there, what will be the consequence here?

Inclosed I have the honor to forward a Spanish copy, with an English translation, of an order from the governor of Maracaibo in regard to the expected smallpox epidemic.

That vaccination be compulsory here, I consider necessary and also that heavy fines and imprisonments be imposed to compel the people, provided it is done with the lymph of cows; but I can not befriend myself with article 2 of this decree which orders that vaccination from arm to arm be performed at once from healthy people. I ask myself where are the healthy people found here, in a country smitten with so much leprosy, phthisis, and scrofulous and syphilitic diseases; in a country where we have people of all shades, from the darkest black, to the purest white, Indians, Negroes, Spanish, and all classes of humanity?

This second article has given rise to much dissatisfaction.

During the last few days the Government has selected a number of the leading foreign merchants and consuls to assist the board of health of the city. Myself and our vice-consul, Mr. Mintos, are also members of this board.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

E. H. PLUMACHER,
United States Consul.

Hon. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

[Translation—Official.]

UNITED STATES OF VENEZUELA,
STATE OF ZULIA, GOVERNOR'S OFFICE,
Maracaibo, August 12, 1898.

In accordance with the order issued by the President of the State to avoid the invasion by the terrible smallpox disease into this city, as it has already attacked many towns of the Republic; in order to make its consequences less doleful should it unfortunately visit us; also considering: That as the superior magistrate has already decided the construction of a hospital for smallpox in conformity with the law on public health, and has distributed many tubes of vaccinating fluid, and expects a large quantity already ordered.

Considering, that vaccination and isolation are the two most efficacious measures which will avoid the contagion of this terrible disease;

That as it is the duty of all authorities in cases of epidemic diseases not to allow the population to fall into distress, but guide it with energy and save it from all danger, imposing by force, if necessary, the use of the remedy; and furthermore:

As previous resolutions have been dictated by this office to keep the city in a clean and sanitary condition, it is hereby decreed:

Article 1. Vaccination shall be compulsory for all the citizens of the district of Maracaibo; and fathers of families are hereby notified that they commit a great crime against public health by neglecting such an important sanitary precept.

Art. 2. In order to comply in the meantime with the foregoing decision and until the quantity of fluid ordered is received, vaccination shall be performed from arm to arm taken from good, sound, young, and healthy persons.

Art. 3. The chiefs of the garrisons, hospitals, mercantile houses, bakeries, factories, schoolmasters, and other persons having under clerks shall be requested to refuse work, instruction, and help to those persons who refuse vaccination within the specified time of twenty days after the distribution of fluid by the doctors; and said operation, when performed, shall be proved by a certificate granted from said physicians.

Art. 4. The inspector of public markets shall dictate all necessary measures in order to prohibit the entrance to the market of all persons who will not be vaccinated.

Art. 5. An agent shall be appointed at each square who, accompanied by the chief of police and a physician, shall go from house to house and vaccinate every inhabitant.

Art. 6. Those who refuse to comply with the foregoing article shall be punished with a fine from 20 to 100 bolivars or three days' arrest.

Art. 7. The police corps, for sanitary service, shall be organized previously, and will prohibit all communication to exist between the city and the hospital during the epidemic period.

Art. 8. Persons in charge of the markets and slaughterhouses shall have same disinfected as quick as possible, and so keep them, as long as the disease is invading the Republic.

Art. 9. All barbers shall renew all of their instruments in use, and disinfect same with proper solutions, or be subject to a fine or arrest as soon as they may be denounced as violators of this decree.

Art. 10. The illustrious bishop will be requested to dictate the necessary measures to prevent the invasion of said disease at the churches, chapels, etc., under his care.

Art. 11. All municipal chiefs as well as other police authorities shall specially observe that the decree and resolution issued by this office on the 22d day of March last, is strictly complied with.

Art. 12. The directors of the local papers are hereby requested to insert the foregoing decree, in order to have same publicly known to all. Let it also be published on supplement sheets.

DAVID A. MONTIEL.

A. E. SENANS, *Secretary*.

STATISTICAL REPORTS.

AUSTRALIA—*New South Wales—Sydney*.—Month of July, 1898. Estimated population, 417,250. Total number of deaths, 625, including diphtheria, 11; enteric fever, 3; measles, 36; scarlet fever, 4, and 2 from whooping cough.

BAHAMAS—*Dunmore Town*.—Two weeks ended September 9, 1898. Estimated population, 1,472. No deaths and no contagious diseases.

Governors Harbor.—Two weeks ended September 10, 1898. Estimated population, 1,500. No deaths and no contagious diseases.

Green Turtle Cay—Abaco.—Two weeks ended September 8, 1898. Estimated population, 3,900. No deaths and no contagious diseases.

CHILE—*Antofagasta*.—Month of July, 1898. Estimated population, 14,000. Total number of deaths, 42, including 1 from phthisis pulmonalis.

FRANCE—*Nantes*.—Month of August, 1898. Estimated population, 200,000. Total number of deaths, 274, including enteric fever, 3, and 1 from whooping cough.

Roubaix.—Month of August, 1898. Estimated population, 125,510. Total number of deaths, 256, including 2 from whooping cough.

GERMANY—*Crefeld*.—Month of August, 1898. Estimated population, 110,000. Total number of deaths, 194, including diphtheria, 2, and 20 from phthisis pulmonalis.

GREAT BRITAIN—*England and Wales*.—The deaths registered in 33 great towns in England and Wales during the week ended September 10 correspond to an annual rate of 24.6 a thousand of the aggregate population, which is estimated at 11,218,378. The highest rate was recorded in Sunderland, viz, 35.5, and the lowest in Cardiff, viz, 17.4.

London.—Two thousand and seven deaths were registered during the week, including measles, 16; scarlet fever, 8; diphtheria, 30; whooping cough, 40; enteric fever, 19, and diarrhea and dysentery, 433. The deaths from all causes correspond to an annual rate of 23.2 a thousand. In greater London 2,762 deaths were registered, corresponding to an annual rate of 22.5 a thousand of the population. In the "outer ring" the deaths included 2 from measles, 10 from diphtheria, and 20 from whooping cough.

Ireland.—The average annual death rate represented by the deaths registered during the week ended September 10 in the 23 principal town districts of Ireland was 27.3 a thousand of the population. The lowest rate was recorded in Newry, viz, 4.0, and the highest in Wexford, viz, 49.7 a thousand. In Dublin and suburbs 206 deaths were registered, including diphtheria, 2; enteric fever, 5; measles, 1; scarlet fever, 2, and whooping cough, 6.